

Follow-up Report on Proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Wing Parish and on the Public Meeting 1st March 2017

Purpose

To provide Wing Parish Council at its meeting on the 29th March with a progress report on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish and to set out recommendations for the next steps in the process.

Previous Minutes

“71/16. Neighbourhood Plan:

a. Residents interest following the leaflet: There had been a positive response to the leaflet with at least ten Wing residents registering their interest in progressing a Neighbourhood Plan.

b. Undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan: Confirmation after an initial village meeting.

c. Nominations of councillors to join the N.P task group: Cllr’s Dejardin, Seviour and Tulloch agreed to join the steering group.

d. Completion of Service Level agreement with Rutland County Council: Confirmation after an initial village meeting

e. Date of inaugural meeting for the steering group:

■ Members agreed that a meeting be arranged for Wednesday 1st March 2017 at 7 p.m. in the Village hall.

■ A personal invite to all those who have registered their interest.

■ If possible those residents who have registered their interest knock on doors and personally deliver the invitation.

■ Nominated councillors to prepare the agenda for the meeting.”

Information

After the approval of the first Wing Neighbourhood Plan leaflet prepared by John Dejardin (graphic by Ian Newsham) at the Parish Council Meeting on the 28th September, distribution was completed by the 18th January and produced around twelve volunteers.

Following the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 25th January 2017, referred to in the above Minutes, the Parish Council Chair and Councillor Seviour met to agree and prepare the agenda for the meeting to be held on the 1st March and to agree other related arrangements such as the Notice of Meeting and its distribution.

Councillor Dejardin had been unexpectedly called away to Australia and was kept informed by e-mail.

It was agreed that a draft leaflet and Notice of Public Meeting, kindly produced by two volunteers from the first leaflet drop, Mark Dyas and Angela Harding, with minor amendments would be deployed. Mr Dyas and Ms Harding had also offered to distribute the leaflet/Notice throughout the Parish and 'door-knock' with a brief explanation about Neighbourhood Plans derived from briefing papers obtained free of charge and without obligation from a leading Neighbourhood Plan consultant.

It was decided at the Agenda Meeting for the 1st March that the central part of the evening meeting should be dedicated to participation by the public in the form of a question and answer session. This session was to be preceded by three short sessions; a welcome by the Parish Council Chair, an introduction to the headline and statutory Neighbourhood Plan background by Councillor Seviour, and an introduction to the Rutland County Council Neighbourhood Plan processes by its 'Liaison Officer'.

It was further agreed that after the close of the 'Open' part of the public meeting and a last call for Steering Group/Task Group volunteers, there would be a half hour meeting with all the potential Steering Group Members to establish contact details, areas of expertise and areas of interest, together with a schedule of meetings to begin the process of drawing up the Plan and supporting data.

Headline and Statutory Background Information

Four good reasons to develop a Neighbourhood Plan:

1) Statutory Position within Localism Act 2011

- A Neighbourhood Plan is a radical new planning tool that gives local people more control over how their community develops and evolves.
- It is a central part of the Localism Act introduced by the Government in November 2011, which aims to devolve more decision making powers from Central Government to individuals, local communities and Parish Councils.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that a Neighbourhood Plan gives the community "direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need". It enables us to ensure we get the right types of development in the right locations and to set planning policies that will be used in determining decisions on planning applications.
- A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory planning framework for the area, in this case Rutland County Council. This statutory status gives it more influence than other non-statutory local documents such as Parish Plans and Village Design Statements. Its statutory status also means that it must be prepared in a certain way, that it must comply with

relevant EU and national legislation and must also be in general conformity with local planning policy.

- Robust evidence is the foundation on which a Neighbourhood Plan has to be based. This includes evidence of community engagement and consultation and how the views, aspirations, wants and needs of local people have been taken into account alongside stakeholder comment and statistical information to justify the policies contained within the Plan.
- There are some restrictions to what Neighbourhood Plans can achieve. For example:
 1. They cannot promote less development than is set out in the Local Plan.
 2. They deal essentially with land use issues; they cannot address enforcement issues.
 3. While issues such as ‘improvements to pavements’ do not directly relate to land use issues, Neighbourhood Plans can encourage funding for these through developer contributions or through action to be undertaken by the Parish Council.
 4. Non planning-related issues such as this can be addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan as issues for Neighbourhood Action.

2) The Housing and Planning Act 2016 creates a new Planning Policy and Process environment that was the subject of an earlier report to Wing Parish Council by Councillor Seviour in 2016 which said:

“Accordingly, this Report merely seeks to highlight the key proposed ‘headline’ changes for Parish Council Members’ information and to underline some of the key LRALC reactions, particularly those relevant to on-going WPC discussions related to Neighbourhood Plans:

- Government is seeking to streamline/speed up the Planning process and is contemplating privatising parts of the process and/or penalising/incentivising local authorities;
- Government is proposing changes to current Planning Law procedures with the introduction of a two stage process based on an initial ‘In Principle Application & Approval’, followed by a ‘Technical Appraisal & Approval’. The first of these involves applicants in less detailed work, in theory thereby involving applicants in less work, risk and costs. Related approvals will only be established on the basis of existing local and national policies, the former in turn based on neighbourhood plans, local plans, small sites and brownfield registers, and the prescribed information need only cover ‘Location’, ‘Uses’, and ‘Amount of Residential Development’. No conditions may be imposed at this stage.

The second 'Technical' stage requires more information but may not vary or restrict matters covered in the 'In Principle' Application.

- Regarding public/community/statutory body consultation, the Government proposals deem that the main thrust of consultation will have been executed during the Neighbourhood and Local Plan processes on which the 'In Principle Application' is based. Government also then intends to stipulate any additional 'In Principle Application' consultative requirements. There will be no statutory requirement to consult at the 'Technical Application' stage.
- Government intends to require Local Authorities to compile and keep up to date; 'Brownfield Site' and 'Small Development Site' (up to ten units) Registers. Both Registers then feature as relevant documents for Approved Site Allocations within the new 'In Principle Application' process and both feature in new stipulations about presumptions in favour of development within the 'In Principle Application' processes.
- Government intends to introduce shorter time-frames than currently obtain for a number of Planning Authority process controls and shorter time-frame capping for Development Approvals.
- Government intends to pursue Local Authorities more rigorously over progress in the execution of Local Plans and in the creation of Neighbourhood Plans, and in the Land Allocation processes related to both.

The message conveyed by Government in these proposals is clear, it wishes to see more efficient Planning Approval processes, and thereby more rapid development of housing and other types of infrastructure.

It is equally clear that Government primarily wishes to see this happen through better co-ordination between the forward planning policy processes and individual applications for development investment. However, it is also effectively establishing overriding presumptive development capacity to deal with perceived Local Authority default.

The proposals, in the round, create a double-edged sword; at one level they invite effective and early consultation by the public through the formal processes of Neighbourhood and Local Plans, Local Authority Allocations, Small Site and Brownfield Site Registers, whilst they also sharpen the edge of what some might term a 'Developers' Charter' in default of good local performance in those forward planning processes."

3) Rutland County Council has commenced the compilation of its new Local Plan and aims to go out to public consultation in the summer of 2017, hence there is no facility to 'stand still' on the basis of Wing's position in the existing

Local Plan but there is an opportunity for Wing to key into that important process through a Neighbourhood Plan.

4) Wing Parish Council has been frustrated on a number of occasions since 2015 (and probably before that too) in having its detailed views on buildings design together with its views on the natural environment, seemingly and largely ignored by the current Planning Application and Approval processes. A Neighbourhood Plan offers the opportunity to redress this position based on well researched and documented positions reflecting local views on the built and natural local environment.

Public Meeting on Wing Neighbourhood Plan 1/3/17

The public meeting took place on the 1st of March in the Wing Village Hall as planned and was attended by 48 residents. The Agenda for this public meeting was circulated to all Parish Councillors before the meeting and made available to all participants on the day. A register of those residents attending was taken, together with their addresses and contact details where possible (a list is attached as Appendix I).

Headline notes of the meeting are attached as Appendix II. A full transcript of Councillor Seviour's presentation is to be made available on the PC section of the Village website, as is the presentation by Colin Dunigun, Planning Officer (Neighbourhood Plans) Rutland County Council.

There was a lively and viable public question and answer session which was constructive and generally reflected an enthusiastic response with little scepticism.

After a last call for potential volunteers for the Steering Group the Public Meeting was closed, all volunteers being asked to stay on for a brief meeting. Again a register was taken together with contact details. There were 24 volunteers in total, that is including three residents who had previously volunteered but who had given their apologies for the public meeting because they were away, (a list of all volunteers is held by the Parish Clerk for reference and communication purposes because the Steering Group once approved by the Parish Council constitutes a sub-committee of the Parish Council and is therefore subject to certain statutory requirements).

During this closed meeting Councillor Seviour explained the need for a follow up short meeting on the 29th March, before the scheduled Parish Council Meeting, to deal with essential statutory and constitutional issues; electing a Chair from the volunteers for the Steering Group, electing a Vice Chair, agreeing Draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Group (attached as Appendix III), agreeing the PC Code of Conduct given the Sub-Committee status in law of the Steering Group, agreeing the Equality Policy, and having

early sight of the proposed Service Level Agreement between the PC and Rutland County Council (attached as Appendix IV).

The Draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Group, Equality Policy, proposed Service Level Agreement, and Map of the Parish Boundary as the proposed boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan were distributed to the volunteers for the Steering Group on the evening of the 1st March.

The Code of Conduct for the PC and reference to Electoral Commission documents on qualifying and disqualifying conditions for Parish Council and sub-committee membership were subsequently circulated by the Parish Clerk to the volunteers in order for them to make the necessary certifications before service.

A suggested meeting date for a full Steering Group meeting 7pm to 9pm for after the 29th March meeting was suggested and agreed for Wednesday 26th April, together with a suggested draft agenda which was distributed.

After a brief discussion about the need for the volunteers to think about nominations for the Chair for the 29th March and to think about listing their skills and attributes related to various illustrated tasks that lay ahead, the meeting was closed on a very positive note.

Decisions for the Parish Council at its meeting on the 29th March

So far the work in connection with pursuing a Neighbourhood Plan for Wing has met with considerable enthusiasm by residents and there are now a number of consequential decisions that need to be resolved as follows:

1. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council note the Progress Report and the enthusiasm expressed by local residents to be involved in the formulation of a Neighbourhood Plan,
2. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council write to Rutland County Council to seek Designation of the Parish Boundary for a Neighbourhood Plan (standard letter attached as Appendix V),
3. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council enter into a Service Level Agreement with Rutland County Council (as attached at Appendix IV), and Authorize the Chair of the Parish Council to sign such Agreement on behalf of the Parish Council,
4. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council establish a Neighbourhood Plan Sub-Committee (to be known as 'The Wing Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group') on the standard terms of reference as attached as Appendix III,
5. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council Approve the consolidated list of volunteers (attached as Appendix VI) coming from the local recruiting exercises as the start-up basis of Steering Group

Membership (in addition to the three nominated Parish Councillors), and receive subsequent reports for Membership changes for Approval as may be necessary from time to time – all such Appointments being conditional on receipt of individual volunteer self-certification of meeting the Electoral Commission’s Qualifying Conditions for Parish Council activity,

- 6. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council Endorse the Steering Group’s election of Chair and Vice-Chair as will be reported to the Meeting on the 29th March,**
- 7. It is Resolved that Wing Parish Council Note that Steering Group Members are subject to the Parish Council Code of Conduct and its Equality Policy,**
- 8. It is Resolved that the three nominated Parish Councillors to the Steering Group report further on the Steering Group’s programme and priorities for execution of work after its Members have had time to consider ‘vision’, ‘priorities’ and ‘work programme’,**
- 9. It is Resolved that the Parish Clerk in consultation with the three nominated Parish Councillors and the Steering Group Chair, be Authorized to submit grant funding applications to RCC/Government consistent with initial deliberations under 7 above.**

David Seviour OBE, BA, CIHCM, 12/3/17.

Wing Parish Councillor & Nominated Steering Group Member

Sources & Acknowledgements:

Localism Act 2011 HMG

Housing and Planning Act 2016 HMG

Final Draft Hungarton Neighbourhood Plan 2017

**‘Getting started: Guidance for newly established Neighbourhood Plan Groups’
Gary Kirk Yourlocale October 2016**

**‘Process towards completion of a Neighbourhood Plan’
Gary Kirk Yourlocale January 2017**

'Open event arrangements' Gary Kirk *Yourlocale* October 2016

'DRAFT [Name of] PARISH COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP' Gary Kirk *Yourlocale* 2017

'Neighbourhood Planning TOOLKIT, Draft, Rutland County Council 2017

Draft Service Level Agreement Neighbourhood Plans, Rutland County Council

'Follow-up Report on the Government's Proposed Legislative Changes to Planning Law', Wing Parish Council, David Seviour 26/4/16

Electoral Commission Guidance on 'Qualifying and Disqualification' for Members of Parish Councils.